

the press.<sup>412</sup> Babbitt stated his current awareness of the tribe's campaign contributions is "about the same:" he knows that the Pequots are "heavy hitters," they have given a "bunch of money" to the American Indian museum and are "sort of a fixture."<sup>413</sup>

Babbitt described two other Indian gaming matters in which he became involved. He said he spoke with Rep. Barney Frank (D-Mass.) by phone about the application of the Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head, Mass., to conduct off-reservation gaming and he was aware that his senior staff was meeting with White House officials and Rep. Frank about it. He also said he spoke to White House Chief of Staff Leon Panetta, or knew that Collier did, concerning the off-reservation gaming application of the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians in Michigan. On that same matter, he had a conversation with Detroit Congresswoman Barbara Rose Collins (D-Mich.) at the request of the White House. *See infra* at 362-63.

**b. Babbitt's Role in the Hudson Decision-Making Process  
and Early Contacts with Interested Parties**

Babbitt said he had little involvement in the consideration of the Hudson application specifically, and Interior Department witnesses agreed. With regard to the Hudson application, none of the Interior witnesses recalls Babbitt's attending a deliberative meeting, making any statements, or taking any actions prior to Eckstein's request for a meeting early the week of July 14. Both Collier and Duffy said that they probably mentioned the status of the application to Babbitt on one or more occasions as one of a list of items for discussion, and perhaps informed him they expected it would be denied. Babbitt said Duffy was the person on his staff who

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<sup>412</sup>National newspaper reports of Pequot political contributions appeared repeatedly from December 1992 through late 1994, and beyond. *See* n. 213, *supra*.

<sup>413</sup>OIC Babbitt Int. at 3.